

March 4, 2013

Dear Congressmen:

We, the undersigned groups and conservative movement leaders, write today to express our support for H.R. 495, the “Free File Program Act,” sponsored by Congressman Peter Roskam (R-Ill.) This legislation would make the private sector “Free File” program permanent. We would urge you to co-sponsor this pro-taxpayer, anti-IRS power grab legislation.

It’s no secret that the IRS and big spenders in Washington, D.C. want to socialize all tax preparation in America. The (ironically-named) IRS Office of Taxpayer Advocate has been pushing for IRS preparation of tax returns for years. There’s only one reason proponents want to do this—tax revenues. If the IRS invites a conflict of interest by adding “tax preparer” to its role as “tax collector,” it’s a near-certainty that everyone’s taxes will rise. In fact, higher tax revenues are a major selling point of mandatory IRS-prepared tax returns.

The “Free File Program Act” is the best hope for preventing this taxpayer nightmare. Since 2003, sixteen private sector tax software providers have voluntarily banded together to provide free tax preparation services to low- and moderate-income families with simple tax situations. 70 percent of all taxpayers—more than 100 million families—have access to this voluntary, private sector initiative. To date, 37 million tax returns have been processed by Free File, saving taxpayers \$129 million in administrative costs.

H.R. 495, the “Free File Program Act,” would permanently authorize this free and voluntary private sector effort. More importantly, it directs the IRS that it “shall not compete with the private sector in providing these services to taxpayers, nor acquire, develop, or deploy enabling systems to duplicate or replace private tax preparation services.” Never again would taxpayers have to worry about the IRS filling out a Form 1040 for them against their will.

As your fellow Americans struggle this tax season to comply with our nation’s costly and complicated tax system, we urge you to stand up for them by co-sponsoring H.R. 495, the “Free File Program Act.”

Grover Norquist
Americans for Tax Reform

Duane Pardee
National Taxpayers Union

Tim Phillips
Americans for Prosperity

Tom Schatz
Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

Jim Martin
60 Plus Association

Heather Higgins
Independent Women's Forum

Phil Kerpen
American Commitment

David Williams
Taxpayer Protection Alliance

Andrew Moylan
R Street Institute

Andrew Quinlan
Center for Freedom and Prosperity

Seton Motley
Less Government

Jimmy LaSalvia
GOProud